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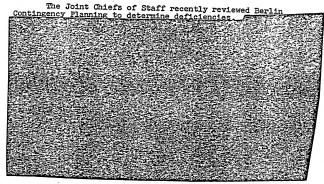
## THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WASHINGTON

MAY 5 1961

## MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subj: Military Planning for a Possible Berlin Crisis

This memorandum is submitted in response to your request (National Security Action Memorandum No. 41, April 25, 1961) for a prompt report, on the current military planning for a possible crisis over Berlin.



Defense representatives on the U.S. Coordinating Group will take action at the earliest possible time to obtain approval for the correction of these deficiencies.

Although, as the Joint Chiefs report, the unilateral military planning "within existing capabilities and national policy guidance" is satisfactory, the national policy guidance is not. NSC 5803, dated February 7, 1958, on which Berlin Contingency Planning is based, does not reflect new developments in U. S. strategic thinking.

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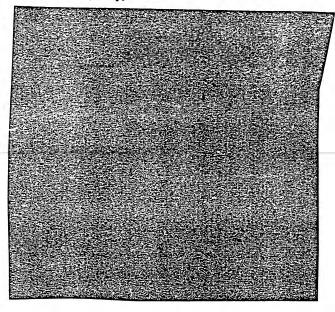
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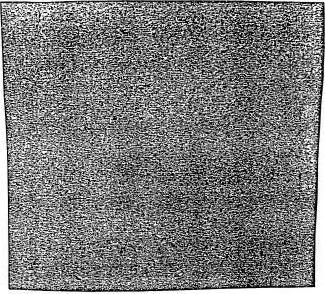
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An early restatement of our national policy with regard to Berlin Contingency Planning is desirable.

Concurrent with our review of military plans, Mr. Acheson's memorandum to you of April 3, 1961, subject: "Berlin", was being considered. The Joint Chiefs, on April 28, 1961, in response to a memorandum of April 17, subject: "Berlin", signed by Mr. McGeorge Bundy, completed three studies directed at resolving certain questions presented in Mr. Acheson's memorandum. Copies of the Joint Chiefs' conclusions and their studies have been furnished to Mr. Bundy.





We shall initiate recommendations to the NSC to permit the accomplishment of items b, c, and  $\mbox{\bf d}.$ 

Robert S. Mc Vernaca

Robert S. McNamara

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### THE PROBLEM

1. To determine the likely military course and effects of a use of substantial non-nuclear ground force to try to reopen ground access to Berlin in the face of either determined local Soviet opposition or solely GDR opposition; and to examine the timing and nature of the steps that would have to be undertaken in preparation for this course of action.

### ASSICTIONS

- Sufficient persistent physical interference with military and/or civilian traffic to and from Berlin, whether by East Germans or by Soviets, has taken place to constitute aggression.
- 3. The President has announced that an Allied ground force has sought peacefully without success to transit the established autobahn route to Berling and that the necessity exists for the application of stronger measures to reopen the route.
- 4. No hostile action is taking place elsewhere in Western Europe.
  - 5. Force levels are as presently constituted.

### PACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

7. The Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs has requested that the study include an examination of the various questions regarding the course of action raised in a memorandum from Mr. Acheson for the President; subject, "BERLIN", dated 3 April 1961.



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Appendix A

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## DISCUSSION

11. For discussion, see Annex to Appendix A.

CONCLUSIONS

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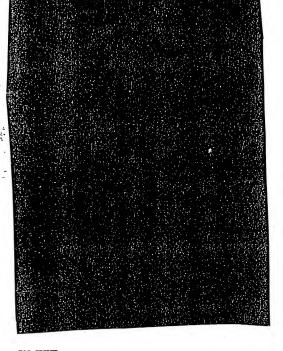
Appendix A

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## ANNEX TO APPENDIX A

### DISCUSSION

1. In the event that ground access to Berlin is denied to the Allies, several options on the levels of force to be employed in regaining access are available.



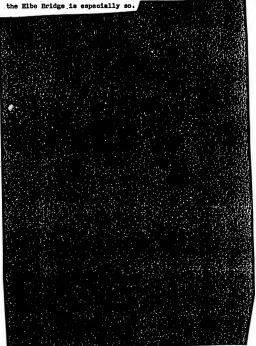
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c. The Soviet leaders are easily able to recognize the quantum differential between battalion and division. It follows that they are able to identify the likelihood of being drawn into a protracted war situation, and possibility of Soviet decision to avoid this might rise accordingly.

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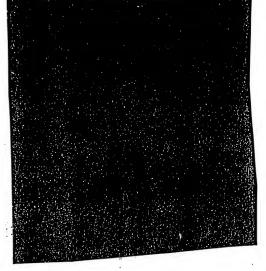
## 8. OBSTACLES

a. The Soviets could massively obstruct the autobahn. Demolition of bridges, overpasses, and culverts, or cratering, or construction of road blocks are all possible. The 47 bridges on the 110-mile route are all vulnerable, and the Elbe Bridge is especially so.



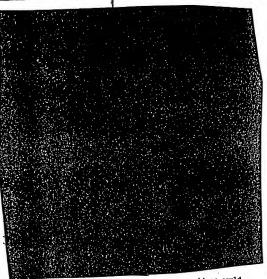
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## 10. MILITARY CAPABILITIES IN THE BERLIN SITUATION

a. The prospective opponents contesting Berlin both possess the capability to wreak thermonuclear devastation on each other's homeland and Europe as well. Thus either can prevent the other's acquisition or retention of an intact Berlin. The question is less the military power to use the full force available than the political judgment whether it is in the national interest to do so.



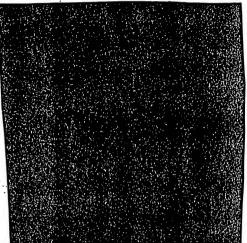
11. PREFARATORY ACTIONS. Many military preparations could be made well ahead of time, so as to contribute in several ways to success of a substantial non-nuclear operation. These preparations can be varied in many ways (timing, scale, speed, nations involved, deceleration, etc.) to suit the military and political needs of the developing situation. Outlined on the next page are major steps relating specifically to substantial non-nuclear ground action; these would no doubt be accompanied by many other actions, some similar in nature taken for other purposes. These other actions on a world-wide basis are discussed in detail in Appendix 0 and listed in general terms in the "Check-list".

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Annex to

- 12. THE EFFECTS OF PHEPARATORY ACTIONS. Preparatory actions would have three main purposes: to improve our military capability, to warn and deter the Soviets, and to prepare Western populations psychologically...
  - a. Improving the Allied Military Capability



## b. Warning and Deterring the Soviets

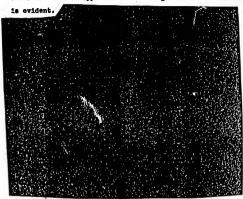
(1) The timing of these preparatory measures offers unique advantages to the Allies.

The preliminaries can be

in response to the first early hints of Soviet interference with Berlin access. These steps are not irreversible, nor do they force the Soviets into any irreversible actions. In fact, they leave the Soviet leadership the opportunity to back down from an intended blockade before the blockade is imposed, before Soviet prestige is committed.

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(2) Here a fundamental difference between a nuclear and a non-nuclear approach to deterring a Berlin blockade



This is an irreversible step and it would create a new situation from which there could be no turning back.



has said, Soviet leadership has concluded the United States will not fight, over Berlin, these unmistakably non-nuclear preparations would, as a minimum, cast doubt over the soundness of the Soviet estimate and the Soviet decision resulting. The actual movement of military forces across the Atlantic is more likely to convince the Soviets of Western determination to

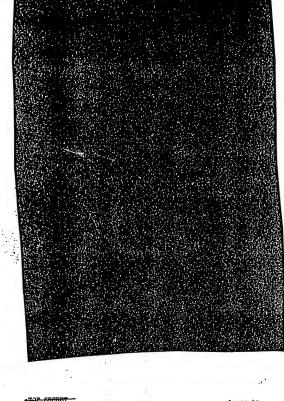
fight than is any other single act short of hostilities.

This movement can begin early enough to let the Soviets draw and act on the necessary conclusions.

- c. Preparing Western Populations Psychologically
- (1) Western publics strongly approve the objective of keeping Wost Berlin free but cannot readily assess the degree of threat to it. Non-nuclear preparations involving troop movements and especially controlled partial mobilization would attest to their governments' assessment. Such evidence the publics would unceretiful. The standard response of Western publics to such totions, when associated with objectives widely approved, has been a strong surge of unified support. These non-nuclear preparations not only would provide some reassurance that nuclear solutions—universally feared among civil populations—were not being sought, prior to exploration of all other alternatives, but also would provide time for public support to be developed and become evident to Soviet and neutral leadership.

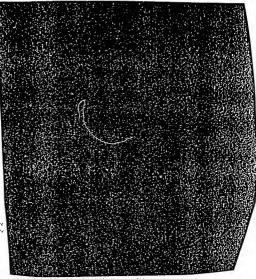
13. ALLIED SUPPORT FOR "TEST OF WILL"





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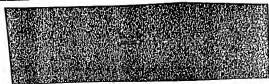
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### c. Provoking Western Rearmament

(1) From their 1948 and 1950 aggressions the Soviets learned the major lesson that, if goaded enough, the keep the sound will actively, extensively rebuild its military power. Knowing that NATO's population, industry, and resources heavily outweigh theirs, they realize that extensive mobilization of the Western potential could tip the power scales against the USSR. They appear to have consciously avoided stimulating major Western effort.

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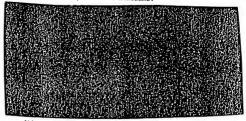
### d. The Soviet Image

- (1) In seeking to extend their control to non-communist areas and populations, the Soviets have tried to present an image of expanding power used with righteous restraint. They have on several occasions, as in Hungary, abandoned this object in pursuit of others, but ordinarily they try to show the USSR as "peace-loving" and as the "wave of the future."
- (2) In using extensive military power to prevent access to Berlin, after allowing such access for 15 out of 16 years, the Soviets would be offering a distinctly different appearance. After seeing neutral opinion react to Hungary and Tibet, they would know such action to involve costs.
- (3) The "peace-loving, wave of the future" image would suffer seriously if the Soviets used military force but in the end restored the original status quo, for Western power would be seen to have prevailed. Knowing this, the Soviets would be given pause by the sight of US and Allied preparatory measures. Seeing evidence that we were preparing to respond with usable, effective military force, they would have to consider the risks to the Soviet image involved in Soviet failure.

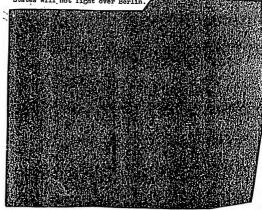
## e. Uncertainty of the Nuclear Risks

(1) The Soviets know that any use of force involves some chance of nuclear war. They know that the chance is small in an action like attacking a single aircraft and extremely large in a nuclear attack on Festern cities. For intermediate

military action, however, the chances are uncertain and difficult to predict. The Soviets cannot identify a precise level of violence short of which Western response would be non-nuclear and beyond which it would be nuclear. Nor can they be sure about the likelihood that nuclear response would extend to the Soviet homeland.



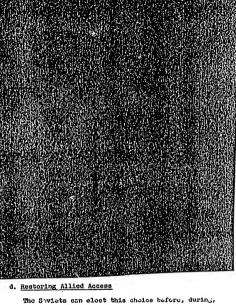
(4) Khrushchev has said several times that the United States will not fight over Berlin.



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10, POSTSIE OUTCOMS



The Similate can elect this choice before, during, or after the operation in question. The progressive build-up and progressive application of Allied military power offer them successively new events to examine.

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e. Initiating Nuclear War

The Soviets can initiate nuclear war at will.

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## TAB TO ANNEX TO APPENDIX A

Narrative Explanation of Use of Substantial Non-nuclear Ground Forces in Reopening Ground Access Route to Berlin

This descriptive analysis is addressed to a sequence of events which might physically occur if an armored division tried to reopen autobahn access to Berlin. It depends mainly on what Soviet action occurred, and there is a large array of possibilities. To describe the military realities of one possible outcome, a number of assumptions have necessarily been made.

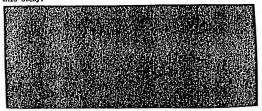
### APPENDIX B

# NON-NUCLEAR MILITARY ACTIONS TO REOPEN AIR ACCESS (U) 7 THE PROBLEM

1. To conduct a study to determine the likely military course and effects of a substantial non-nuclear effort to reopen and maintain air secess to Berlin. This study should examine the various questions regarding this course of action raised in reference memorandum, includirs, the ability of air access, if it could be maintained, to meet the needs of (1) the Western garrison, and (2) the civil population. It should also consider needed preparatory steps.

### ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions are made in connection with this study:



### FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

- 3. Quadripartite agreements (US, UK, France and USSR) in 1946 established certain air access routes, certain air limitations and a means for conducting flight operations between West Germany and Berlin.
- The Soviets possess several means of harassment to US and Allied aircraft short of combat operations.
- 5. Plans (US end multilateral) exist which provide for the garrison and civil Berlin airlifts and for providing fighter escorts and patrol in the corridors.

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6. There are certain preparatory measures which the US can take to improve ability to maintain air access or conduct a Berlin airlift.



- 8. For additional facts, see Annex A to Appendix B.
  - DISCUSSION
- 9. For discussion, see Annex B to Appendix B.

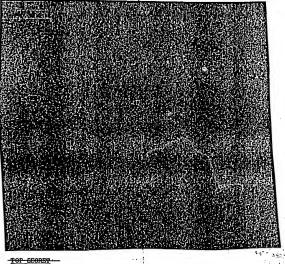
### CONCLUSIONS

10. If there is no harassment, the United States and its Allies can maintain a successful civil airlift for Berlin.

### ANNEX A TO APPENDIX B

### FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM. " '

- 1. The quadripartite agreements (US, UK, France and USSR) include the following:
  - a. Three air corridors 20 Miles wide with no agreed ceiling;
  - b. A Berlin control zone 20 miles in radius with a 10,000-foot ceiling;
  - c. No combat aircraft to fly in the corridors between West Germany and Berlin;
  - d. The Berlin Air Safety Center jointly manned to be the clearing house for flight between West Germany and Berlin in the corridors.

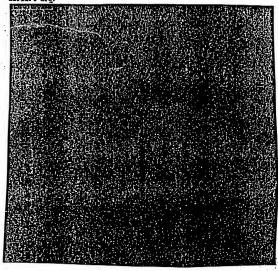


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Annex A to Appendix B

- 4. There are certain preparatory steps that can be taken and plans do exist which could improve US capabilities in regard to maintaining air access to Berlin or conducting a Berlin airlift. In this discussion these preparatory steps will be limited to those concerning the air operations just mentioned. A discussion of non-military preparatory measures or such measures as partial mobilization are discussed elsewhere in this paper.
- 5. Military preparatory measures that could be taken in connection with maintaining air access or conducting a Berlin airlift are:



7. The items indicated in paragraph 5 above are included in the military and non-military check lists which are more thoroughly discussed in Appendix C.

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Annex A to Appendix B

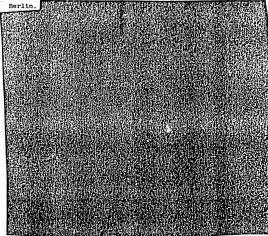
## ANNEX B TO APPENDIX R DISCUSSION

- 1. A discussion of the maintenance of US and Allied air access between Berlin and West: Germany revolves around the chief reasons for the maintenance of this air access. These reasons are:
  - a. To maintain our legal rights in connection with air access.
  - b. To conduct an airlift to Berlin when an airlift becomes necessary because the surface access routes have been blockaded.
- 2. The maintenance of air access simply to maintain US legal position has certain disadvantages. First of all, as soon as the United States or the Allies are required to operate combat aircraft on defense missions in the corridors, they, themselves, will be forced to violate agreements, relative to air traffic control.

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7. The economic situation in Berlin is markedly different today as compared to 1948. In 1948 the Berliners were still digking out of the rubble of the wer, industry had not developed significantly as the Russians had even removed power plants from



Annex B to Appendix B

10. In regard to airlift planning, political and economic advisors of the United States, United Kingdom, France and Germany meet periodically in Bonn to review the requirements for such a program. Their last meeting was in January 1961.

11. It must be reiterated that the airlift program and the stockpile program are complementary.

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13. The maintenance of communications between Berlin and West Gormany to support in airlift in the face of strong haransment by the Soviets or East Germans is problematic.

Exclusion (Control of Control of

14. Before turning to a discussion of the weather problem, the additional following geographical factors should be noted. Tegal Air Base in Berlin, to be used by the US Air Force, receives its power supply from East German sources. The east end of the

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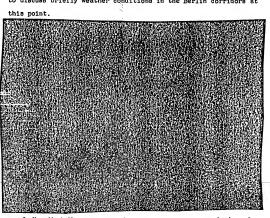
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Annex B to

runway at this field is 34 miles from the Soviet sector.

Templehof is the other airport to be used by the US Air Force, and the east end of this runway is 2.5 miles from the Soviet sector. Because of the ease with which the navigational aids supporting an airlift can be jammed, it is considered necessary to discuss briefly weather conditions in the Berlin corridors at this point.



16. Now that these communic and geographical factors have been established, the next portion of this study will be a detailed discussion of the airlift plans themselves.



Annex B to.

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28. This concludes the discussion of existing airlift plans.

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### APPENDIX C

## NON-NUCLEAR MILITARY COUNTERMEASURES TO REOPEN ACCESS TO BERLIN (U)

## THE PROBLEM

1 To determine water . T	
1. To determine military actions of increasing severity, e.g.	, 1
naval blockade and air harassment, which may be undertaken in	2
areas other than Central Europe to apply pressure on the Soviets	, 3
by demonstrating determination and acceptance of the risks	11
involved, to reopen access to Berlin.	5
ASSUMPTIONS	-
2. "Access" to Berlin herein refers to either surface or air	6
access, or both.	7
. 3. Prior actions, military and/or non-military, have revealed	•
Fort Comment and or non-military, have revealed	8
East German and/or Soviet intent to use military force to main-	9
tain obstructions to Allied access to Berlin.	10
FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM	
	No.
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5. For additional pertinent points in regard to the "Check-	
ist" soo Arres A	19
ist", see Annex A to Appendix C.	20
DISCUSSION	
6. For discussion, see Annex B to Appendix C.	21
CONCLUSIONS	
7. It is concluded that:	
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### ANNEX A TO APPENDIX C

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### FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

The following points with regard to the "Checklist" are	1
particularly pertinent to this problem:	. 5
1. The purpose of the "Checklist" is to facilitate the action	3

- of the US Coordinating Group in making its recommendations to the President regarding the selection and timing of appropriate 5 measures in the light of the political-military situation at the time of any Berlin incident.
- 2. The "Checklist" is divided into six groups corresponding 8 . with possible developments of a Berlin situation in which the 9 Southterturn over their access responsibilities to the East 10 GCT mans; and subsequently attempt to blockade Allied surface and/ 11 or air access. Measures in the "Checklist" are listed in an 12 ascending order of severity, but they may be implemented in any 13 order desired on recommendation of the US Coordinating Group and 14 as authorized by the President. 15

4. The original concept of the "Checklist" envisages that it
will be augmented by additional measures as deemed appropriate.

23
In this regard, efforts are continuing to increase the number of
countermeasures, most recent efforts being on measures as well as
5
other measures of nonmilitary nature. In general, since publication of the original "Checklist", it has been under continual
review at staff level by members of the US Coordinating Group

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for appropriate refinement and expansion.

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## ANNEX B TO APPENDIX C

### DISCUSSION

1. "Checklist", a reference point for this study. In the event of a threatened or actual Soviet and/or East German attempt to block either or both surface and air access to Berlin, there 3 is a wide range of countermeasures which may be implemented by the United States and its Allies.

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4. Aspects to be considered.

constitute international delinquency.

5. The term "reprisal" defined. A reprisal may be defined as a coercive measure taken by one state against another, without belligerent intent in order to secure redress, or to prevent

occurrence of acts or ommissions, which under international law

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Annex B to Appendix C 24

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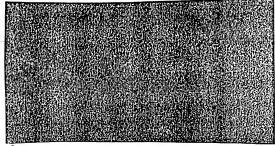
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6. Preparatory and Supporting Actions to be Taken. a. Reference to the concept of reprisal, as indicated above, 2

should be made in discussions with Free World governments and in propaganda output.

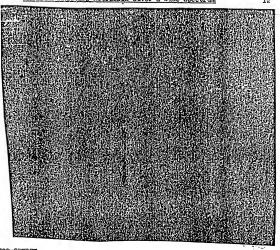
7. Military Operations Conducted Within Political Limitations

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8. Possible Military Reprisals Cover a Wide Spectrum

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Annex B to Appendix C

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10. Legal Aspects of Reprisal Actions	
31	13
a. In the past, the Soviet Union has publicly repudiated	14
agreements, to which both it and the United States are parties	. 7.5
relating to the occupation of Germany and Berlin. They have	
	16
also issued that amounts to an ultimatum threatening unilat-	17
eral action, including probable denial of US and Allied	18
access to Berlin, if that repudiation is not accepted.	200
Total and accepted. He was a second of the s	100
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11. Soviet Reactions 23

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12. Reactions Outside the Communist Bloc. 14

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